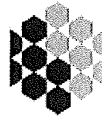


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Anne Dillon
Inquiry into Hyponatraemia-Related Deaths
Arthur House
41 Arthur Street
BELFAST BT1 4GB

Your Ref: AD-0657-13

Our Ref: LIT 0477/2008/B5/CR

Date: ¹⁰10 October 2013

Dear Ms Dillon

COMPLAINTS REGARDING CLINICAL INCIDENTS AND SERIOUS ADVERSE INCIDENTS

I refer to your correspondence of 2 October 2013 and the Department's earlier reply in this regard. I am instructed by my client that the data collected with regard to Complaints made to HSC Trusts and with regard to Serious Adverse Incidents (SAIs) is mutually exclusive. Whilst an individual SAI may also result in a complaint being made to a Trust, the Department have no way from the data available of cross-referencing information to identify these instances.

The Department's Hospital Information Branch, in line with their Records Disposal Schedule, does not retain any information returns for longer than 10 years. However, on this occasion, they are able to derive information prior to 2003 from a previous query answered in 2007.

I am instructed that the concerns of the quality of the information prior to 2007 relate mainly to possible inconsistencies in the way that information was recorded by legacy HSS Trusts. This issue was addressed following the Review of Public Administration and as a consequence, publication of a routine statistical report was instigated. The most recent report can be accessed at:

http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/stats_research/hospital-stats_research/hospital-stats/patient_safety/complaints.htm

As previously stated in earlier correspondence, it is not possible to provide information on complaints and SAIs which relate solely to clinical incidents as the data is not collected by this category.

I am sorry the Department cannot be of more assistance in this regard.

Yours sincerely

CATHERINE RODGERS



DF1/13/660819 (CR/SK))